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ABSTRACT

The National Center on Educational Outcomes has identified six core principles of assessment and accountability systems that include all students, specifically students with disabilities, and they have developed brief statements of rationale for each of the principles. These principles, which reflect best practices, are consistent with the requirements of current federal laws governing special education and Title I services. Self-study checklists for participation, accommodations, and alternate assessment have been developed based on these principles. This study guide focuses on these checklists and provides a workbook format to study the implementation of these systems in a given educational setting. Each section contains the self-study checklist with a discussion of adaptation to state and school district settings, a recording form for adaptations made, examples of key questions and evidence, a checklist, and an action planning process recording form. (SLD)

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ED 459 190

A Self-Study Guide to Implementation of Inclusive Assessment and Accountability Systems

A Best Practice Approach

National Center on Educational Outcomes

November 2001

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction to the Principles and Characteristics of Inclusive Assessment and Accountability Systems and the Self-Study Checklists	Pages 3-4
Overview of the Principles and Characteristics of Inclusive Assessment and Accountability Systems	Pages 5-6
Purpose and Use: Self-Study Guide	Page 7
Process Recommendations: Self-Study Guide	Pages 8-9
PARTICIPATION Self-Study Checklist	Pages 10-19
Adaptation to State and District Settings	Page 10
Adaptation Recording Form – Participation	Page 11
Examples of Key Questions and Evidence – Participation	Page 12
Participation Checklist	Page 13-17
Participation Action Planning Process Recording Form	Pages 18-19
ACCOMMODATIONS Self-Study Checklist	Pages 20-27
Adaptation to State and District Settings	Page 20
Adaptation Recording Form – Accommodations	Page 21
Examples of Key Questions and Evidence – Accommodations	Page 22
Accommodations Checklist	Pages 23-25
Accommodations Action Planning Process Recording Form	Pages 26-27
ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT Self-Study Checklist	Pages 28-36
Adaptation to State and District Settings	Page 28
Adaptation Recording Form – Alternate Assessment	Page 29
Examples of Key Questions and Evidence – Alternate Assessment	Page 30
Alternate Assessment Checklist	Pages 31-34
Alternate Assessment Action Planning Process Recording Form	Pages 35-36

Introduction to the Principles and Characteristics of Inclusive Assessment and Accountability Systems, and the Self-Study Checklists

All children can learn. That simple but remarkable statement represents a shift in thinking about schools and schooling in the United States. For the past decade, our nation's schools have been refocused on efforts to set high standards for the learning of all children, and to develop assessment and accountability systems that will ensure that all children do in fact learn, and learn to very high levels.

We have seen remarkable progress in these efforts in the past decade. Most states included 10% or fewer of their students with disabilities in state assessments in the early 1990s. Participation and accommodation policies were either non-existent or limiting. Only one state had developed an inclusive assessment system in the early 1990s – with both a general and alternate assessment that were fully implemented. Negative consequences of excluding students with disabilities emerged: increased rates of referral to special education, exclusion from the curriculum, and no information on the educational results of students with disabilities. The Education Summit of 1989 set an agenda for education reform that called for higher expectations, rigorous educational standards, and assessments of progress for all students; this was reinforced by Goals 2000, ESEA Title I, and IDEA 97.

Participation rates in state assessments increased steadily during the 1990s; in 1998 most states had over 50% of students with disabilities in their assessments. Participation and accommodation policies have been established in every state. Access to the curriculum emerged as a critical part of improving the performance of students with disabilities on state assessments. All but a few states had developed alternate assessments by 2000 for those students unable to participate in the general state assessment even with accommodations.

Positive consequences of including students with disabilities emerged – performance increased; expectations for students rose; access to the curriculum increased; teachers became more skilled at teaching students with disabilities. But unintended negative consequences were identified as well.

States and districts have the challenge of identifying both the positive and negative consequences of their assessment and accountability systems and developing strategies to build on the positive and eliminate the negative consequences. To that end, we have identified six core principles of assessment and accountability systems that include all students, specifically those with disabilities, along with brief statements of rationale for each principle. In addition, for each of the principles, we have identified specific characteristics to provide more precise understanding of the principles, again with brief statements of rationale. An overview of the principles and characteristics is provided on the next two pages. The principles and characteristics may be found in their entirety at http://education.umn.edu/nceo/OnlinePubs/Synthesis40.html)

The purpose of the "Principles and Characteristics of Inclusive Assessment and Accountability Systems" is to focus and clarify stakeholder discussion on essential components of inclusive systems state by state and district by district and to provide an impetus for revisiting basic

assumptions and beliefs about emerging state and district systems. We hope these principles also will stimulate new and vigorous discussions at the district, state, and national levels, among policymakers, researchers, educators, and the public.

These are principles that reflect best practice, not simply compliance with legal requirements. The principles are consistent with the requirements of current Federal laws governing special education and Title I services (i.e., IDEA 97; IASA 1994), but they go beyond the letter of the law where research and practice have suggested benefits of specific approaches.

Self-study checklists based on the principles and characteristics: We have developed a set of self-study checklists based on the principles and characteristics on three topics essential to inclusive systems – participation, accommodations, and alternate assessment. These self-study checklists may be used in part or in whole, as needed, to address parts or the whole of the assessment and accountability systems.

The purpose of the set of three self study checklists is to help stakeholder groups apply the principles and characteristics to their current policies and practices, and to determine their strengths and prioritize areas for improvement.

This **Self Study Guide to Inclusive Assessment and Accountability Systems** focuses on these checklists, and provides a workbook format to study the implementation of these systems in your setting.

Overview of the Principles and Characteristics of Inclusive Assessment and Accountability Systems

A Best Practice Approach

Overview of Principles

Principle 1. All students with disabilities are included in the assessment system.

This principle indicates that all students are in the assessment system in some way – taking the assessment in the same way as all other students, or taking the same assessment with accommodations, or for a small percentage of students, participating in an alternate assessment. The progress of every student toward high standards will be evaluated (i.e., assessed) in some way.

Principle 2. Decisions about how students with disabilities participate in the assessment system are the result of clearly articulated participation, accommodations, and alternate assessment decision-making processes.

This principle focuses on the need for thoughtful student-by-student decisions about how each student can show what she or he knows and is able to do (while still holding high expectations), thus how each can best participate in the assessment system. The principle also focuses on the related need for participation decisions to be made by the IEP team with full knowledge of the implications of the decision.

Principle 3. All students with disabilities are included when student scores are publicly reported, in the same frequency and format as all other students, whether they participate with or without accommodations, or in an alternate assessment.

This principle provides the first level of accountability for the scores of students with disabilities. Regardless of how students participate in assessments, with or without accommodations, or in an alternate assessment, students' scores are reported, or if scores are not reported due to technical issues or absence, the students are still accounted for in the reporting system.

Principle 4. The assessment performance of students with disabilities has the same impact on the final accountability index as the performance of other students, regardless of how the students participate in the assessment system (i.e., with or without accommodations, or in an alternate assessment).

This principle provides the second level of accountability for students with disabilities. In order for all students to count in increased expectations for accountable schools, all student assessment participation and performance data must be integrated into district and state accountability indices. Federal Title I requirements specifically require this, but districts and states should address fully inclusive accountability in any local or state-developed accountability indices to promote equal access and opportunity for all students.

Principle 5. There is improvement of both the assessment system and the accountability system over time, through the processes of formal monitoring, ongoing evaluation, and systematic training in the context of emerging research and best practice.

This principle addresses the need to base inclusive assessment and accountability practices on current and emerging research and best practice, with continuous improvement of practices as research-based understanding evolves. By working together on improvement of assessment and accountability systems, stakeholders can sustain commitment to keeping the standards high and keeping the focus clear on all students being successful. Ongoing training of IEP team members and other key partners is an essential component of this effort.

Principle 6. Every policy and practice reflects the belief that ***all students*** must be included in state and district assessment and accountability systems.

This principle addresses the core belief system that underlies inclusive assessment and accountability systems. With this belief system in place, every question that arises or decision to be made goes back to "what does it mean for how each and every student counts in our system?" and "what are the possible consequences for each and every student in our system?" Each and every student includes those students who have disabilities of all types and students who are limited in their English proficiency, as well as other students such as those who are highly mobile, disadvantaged, or of minority status.

Please see the full Principles and Characteristics at http://education.umn.edu/nceo/OnlinePubs/Synthesis40.

Purpose and Use
Self-Study Guide to Implementation of Inclusive Assessment and Accountability Systems:

The National Center on Educational Outcomes has developed this self-study guide to assist state and district stakeholders in ongoing analysis of the effects of state and district assessment and accountability systems on the educational outcomes of students with disabilities. This can be used to:

- determine the current status of implementation of the systems
- identify positive consequences of the systems
- identify unintended negative consequences of the systems
- develop an action plan that will result in more positive and fewer negative outcomes for students with disabilities

This self-study guide includes three components:

1. **Principles and characteristics of inclusive assessment and accountability systems.**
These are "best practice" foundations for inclusive assessment and accountability systems that contain statements of principles for inclusive systems, and the specific characteristics of each principle. These have been generated from documentation of a decade of standards-based reform, and through structured discussions among national, state, and local stakeholders about inclusive assessment and accountability systems. This guide contains an overview of the principles as a preface to the self-study checklists. A complete set of principles and characteristics to use as a reference to work on the checklists can be found at http://education.umn.edu/nceo/OnlinePubs/Synthesis40.html.

2. **Self-study checklists – Indicators of inclusive policies and practices - for three interrelated topics:**
    a. Participation of students with disabilities
    b. Accommodations
    c. Alternate Assessment

3. **Worksheets for each checklist** to allow for tailoring to a specific setting, including:
    a. Adaptation process and recording form for specific additional indicators for specific settings
    b. Examples of key questions related to the indicators, with recording forms to generate questions that fit specific settings; and examples of supporting evidence, with recording forms to document the identified evidence
    c. Action planning process recording form

Process Recommendations
Self-Study Guide to Implementation of Inclusive Assessment and Accountability Systems:

This guide may be used in several different ways. For example, consider these options:

- **Address all three self-study checklists at once, or work on one only, or on portions of one or more**: The three self-study checklists are interrelated, and evidence for the indicators in one checklist often applies to one or both of the others. A study group can systematically work through each checklist in order; or focus on one principle across all three checklists; or explore one checklist at a time. Study groups may choose to address specific concerns, and thus elect to pull indicators across principles and checklists. There is no "preferred" method to approaching these checklists – do what will help address the most pressing concerns.

- **Large group work session**: A group of stakeholders can work together at a common meeting site. Involving stakeholders with multiple perspectives and roles will increase the likelihood that the resulting action plan will be successful.

- **Multiple small group sessions, with merging of results**: Several stakeholder groups can complete the self-study checklists separately, and then convene a larger representative meeting in order to reach consensus on the results. That may include educators, parents, policymakers, or community partners, just to name a few possible groups. It may also be helpful to include stakeholders at multiple levels of implementation: state, district, and local school perspectives may be very, very different, and recognizing what these varying perspectives are will help make the necessary improvements to ensure a unified system at all levels.

- **Survey responses, followed by work group analysis**: The self-study checklists can be used as a survey that key stakeholders are invited to complete individually. A work group could then compile and analyze the results, do follow-up data collection as necessary, and develop an action plan.

Adaptation to state and district settings: How can you use these checklists to study the implementation of your state or district policies and practices, given the large variability in state and district approaches? We have provided some ways to adapt the checklists prior to each of the three checklists.

First we suggest two steps to develop shared understanding of the principles and characteristics and the checklist in order to identify where your setting is the same, and where it is different; and then a third step to tailor the checklists to your setting.

Then we include a recording sheet for additional indicators, examples of key questions, and examples of evidence unique to your setting. These setting specific indicators, key questions, and examples of evidence should be added to those we have provided when you work with your stakeholders.

Action planning: Based on our analysis, how can we set priorities and develop a working plan to improve our system? We have provided an action planning process recording form at the end of each checklist. As you prepare for this step, you can define specific processes to use to set priorities, and for consensus seeking. The form we provide suggests a sequence of steps, but you should feel free to modify that sequence to meet your needs.

If you have additional questions about how to use the self-study worksheets and action planning forms, please contact Rachel Quenemoen, Senior Fellow for Technical Assistance and Research, National Center on Educational Outcomes, at quene003@umn.edu

PARTICIPATION SELF STUDY CHECKLIST
ADAPTATION TO STATE AND DISTRICT SETTINGS

These optional process steps will help you adapt the checklists to your specific setting.

Step One: Background Review of Principles and Characteristics. If necessary, review the Principles and Characteristics of Inclusive Assessment and Accountability Systems. You may do this review in a small group prior to your work on the checklists, or you can do this as part of your process to work with the checklists.

You may use a simple jigsaw process to do this in the group. The jigsaw process is a generic process that allows a group to understand lengthy or complex materials by breaking the entire document into smaller pieces. It consists of three steps generally:
Step 1: Team Assignments – Divide the material into smaller parts, and assign each section to each person or group.
Step 2: Individual review of the pieces – Invite each person or group to read their section, and think about how to share the content with others.
Step 3: Team sharing of pieces, fitting the pieces together – Ask each person or group to share the information they gathered, fitting the pieces of your content puzzle together.

Identify additions in concepts that are important to you in your setting; or discuss components of the principles that you wish to adapt or delete. Justify any additions or deletions based on what you understand to be the best outcomes for students with disabilities in assessment and accountability systems.

Step Two: **Review of Participation Self Study Checklist, and Identification of Additional Implementation Indicators**. Implementation indicators are conditions that indicate the extent to which a standards-based education system reflects the principles and characteristics of inclusive systems. These may vary depending on your setting. Add setting-specific indicators to the self-study checklist. Record them on the form that follows for use by your group.

Step Three: **Examples of Key Questions and Supporting Evidence.** As you work through the self-study checklists, look at the examples of key questions and supporting evidence that follow the form, and discuss other questions and supporting evidence that will help you evaluate the status of each indicator in your setting. Record them on the form that follows, and add this information to the checklists when you convene your group.

PRINCIPLE # _____ **Self-study checklist: PARTICIPATION**

Setting-Specific Indicators	Setting-Specific Key Questions	Setting-Specific Supporting Evidence

EXAMPLES OF KEY QUESTIONS – PARTICIPATION

Participation Indicators

Principle 1 – All students

- Do our policies specifically require the participation of all students?
- Do we have evidence of unofficial exemption practices at the district or school levels, or of 100% participation?

Principle 2 – Decisions

- Do our policies define the decision processes clearly?
- Do we monitor the linkage between the IEP team decision and actual participation of each student?

Principle 3 – Reporting

- What do our report formats look like, and how clearly do they show participation and performance of students with disabilities?
- Who has easy access to the reports?

Principle 4 - Accountability

- What is included in our state or district accountability system? Is it the same or different from the Title I Adequate Yearly Progress requirements? If so, what is included in Title I AYP?
- What are the system and student level stakes of our system? How do they affect students with disabilities?

Principle 5 - Improvement

- How do we know how our assessment and accountability systems are working?
- What training will be effective, and for whom?

Principle 6 – Inclusive School Reform

- How are the data from assessments and other sources used to improve schools at the state, district, and school levels?

EXAMPLES OF EVIDENCE – PARTICIPATION

All students

Copies of state and district policies, participation rates, records of reasons for students not being assessed, actual performance reports accounting for all students

Decisions

Copies of state and district policies, monitoring reports, survey of parents and teachers, assessment report of how many students use accommodations and how that affects their scores, how many are alternate assessment participants

Reporting

Actual copies of public reports, review of who uses reports and for what purpose

Accountability

Copies of accountability formulas, descriptions of system and student stakes, report on how stakes affect students with disabilities

Improvement

Report from state and district administrators on what information is captured, training schedules, content, and audiences, monitoring reports

Inclusive School Reform

Official descriptions of continuous improvement processes at the state, district, and local levels, reports from school based improvement teams

PARTICIPATION
SELF STUDY CHECKLIST
(Action planning process and recording form follow the checklist.)

Indicators of inclusive *participation* policies and practices: *To score, circle yes or no to the right of each item, based on knowledge of your current system. If you have insufficient information to respond to an item, circle INA (Information Not Available). Tally yes, no, and INA responses at the end of the checklist. You may consider the indicators to be "in progress," and then you will want to define precisely where you are in implementation, and what you need to do next. Responses may vary from the state view, to the district view, to the local school view.*	**Rating**
Principle 1: All students. *All students with disabilities are included in the assessment system.*	**Principle 1** – *ALL students*
Participation.1.a. There are clearly articulated beliefs or principles for including *all* students in the assessment system, including definitions of assessment participation options.	**Partic.1.a.** Yes No INA In progress
Participation 1.b. *All* students in all placement settings who receive federal or state funded educational services participate in the assessment system (including those who are home schooled or attending private schools, charter schools, in the juvenile justice system, etc.).	**Partic.1.b.** Yes No INA In progress
Participation.1.c. Inclusion of *all* students occurs in one of three ways: • without accommodations; • with accommodations that allow the student to show what she or he knows and can do; • in an alternate assessment.	**Partic.1.c.** Yes No INA In progress

Participation.1.d. Assessment alternatives (other than the same way as other students, with accommodations, or in an alternate assessment) are available beyond these three ways *only* if they apply to *all* students, and the implications of their use are carefully reviewed and monitored to ensure that expectations remain aligned to high standards. For example, this careful consideration would apply to alternatives such as "gap" assessments, out-of-level testing, or simplified forms of the test, where there may be negative implications for students through use of the alternatives.	**Partic.1.d.** Yes No INA In progress
Participation.1.e. Exemptions or exclusions are allowed *only* to the extent that they are allowed for *all* students (i.e., students without disabilities).	**Partic.1.e.** Yes No INA In progress
Principle 2: Decisions. *Decisions about how students with disabilities participate in the assessment system are the result of clearly articulated participation, accommodations, and alternate assessment decision-making processes.*	**Principle 2** – *Decisions*
Participation 2.a. There is a clearly articulated participation decision-making process, with questions and variables (i.e., options) to guide thoughtful decisions.	**Partic.2.a.** Yes No INA In progress
Participation 2.b. Decisions are made on an individual basis, by a student's IEP team, and involve people who know the student best.	**Partic.2.b.** Yes No INA In progress
Participation 2.c. Decisions are based on a student's ability to show what she or he knows and is able to do in the assessment formats available to all students. Decisions are not made on a student's current instructional program, current level of functioning, or on expectations that the student will perform poorly, since those are variables that are being measured (quality of program and student performance).	**Partic.2.c.** Yes No INA In progress
Participation 2.d. Participation decisions for individual students are reviewed at least annually, prior to state or district assessment.	**Partic.2.d.** Yes No INA In progress

Participation 2.e. There is a place to document participation decisions on the IEP form.	**Partic.2.e.** Yes No INA In progress
Participation 2.f. There are clear processes for collecting and compiling individual participation decisions to ensure appropriate materials are available on test day (e.g., large print test booklets, short segment test booklets) or for an alternate assessment, and to monitor appropriateness of decisions.	**Partic.2.f.** Yes No INA In progress
Participation 2.g. Parents and students are notified of participation options and implications.	**Partic.2.g.** Yes No INA In progress
Participation 2.h IEP team members (including parent and student) understand the implications of participation decisions, and that understanding is evident in documentation or monitoring reports.	**Partic.2.h.** Yes No INA In progress
Principle 3: Reporting. *All students with disabilities are included when student scores are publicly reported, in the same frequency and format as all other students whether they participate with or without accommodations, or in an alternate assessment.*	**Principle 3** - *Reporting*
Participation 3.a. The participation rate reported for students with disabilities is calculated by dividing the number of students with disabilities assessed by the number of students with disabilities enrolled.	**Partic.3.a.** Yes No INA In progress
Participation 3.b. Actual scores of *all* students are reported, aggregated, and disaggregated to the extent that is technically feasible.	**Partic.3.b.** Yes No INA In progress
Participation 3.c. The number and percent of students excluded or exempted from the assessment is reported, along with the reasons, clearly showing students with disabilities as a separate category.	**Partic.3.c.** Yes No INA In progress
Participation 3.d. Reports are disseminated to *all* stakeholders (e.g., parents, educators, employers, community members) with clear explanations of results and implications for *all* students, including those with disabilities.	**Partic.3.d.** Yes No INA In progress

Participation 3.e. All students who receive educational services in all placement settings are included in the reporting system.	**Partic.3.e.** Yes No INA In progress
Principle 4: Accountability. *The assessment performance of all students with disabilities is included in accountability indices at the district, state and federal levels, as an equal factor to all other student assessment data, regardless of how the students participate in the assessment system (i.e., with or without accommodations, or in an alternate assessment).*	**Principle 4** – *Accountability*
Participation 4.a. There are incentives for full participation in the accountability system (e.g., including participation rates or increase in participation rates in the formula).	**Partic.4.a.** Yes No INA In progress
Participation 4.b. *All* students are included in the accountability index for adequate yearly progress measurement, whether through actual assessment scores (with or without accommodations, or in alternate assessment), scores determined through multiple measures, or through some proxy measure (e.g., a "0" score for students who were excluded for any reason).	**Partic.4.b.** Yes No INA In progress
Participation 4.c. Systems are held accountable for high expectations and progress toward standards of *all* students, regardless of disability status.	**Partic.4.c.** Yes No INA In progress
Participation 4.d. Appeals processes are in place for *student* accountability purposes if students have not had the opportunity or have not been expected to learn to high standards; or if current assessment methods do not allow the student to fairly show what she or he knows and is able to do.	**Partic.4.d.** Yes No INA In progress
Principle 5: Improvement. *There is improvement of both the assessment system and the accountability system over time, through the processes of formal monitoring, ongoing evaluation, and systematic training in the context of emerging research and best practice.*	**Principle 5** – *Improvement*

Participation 5.a. Information about assessment participation rates is used to improve the quality of assessment processes at the school, district, and state levels.	**Partic.5.a.** Yes No INA In progress
Participation 5.b. Monitoring and evaluation processes are in place to study consequences of participation decisions, and to identify needed changes in the state and district accountability systems, linked to emerging research and best practices.	**Partic.5.b.** Yes No INA In progress
Participation 5.c. Collaborative training mechanisms are in place for IEP teams and other key personnel, based on continuous monitoring and evaluation results, and linked to emerging research and best practices.	**Partic.5.c.** Yes No INA In progress
Principle 6: Inclusive School Reform. *Every policy and practice reflects the belief that* ***all students*** *must be included in state and district assessment and accountability systems.*	**Principle 6** – *Inclusive School Reform*
Participation 6.a. All participation guidelines, processes, and evaluation strategies are developed and monitored by special and general education personnel, with other stakeholders as appropriate.	**Partic.6.a.** Yes No INA In progress
Participation 6.b. There is inclusion of *all* students across all components of the state or district assessment and accountability systems (from development of standards through curriculum design and instruction, to assessment, accountability, and school improvement.)	**Partic.6.b.** Yes No INA In progress
Participation 6.c. School improvement processes clearly include *all* students, based on data that clearly show the progress of subgroups of students within the larger population, including subgroups within disability categories.	**Partic.6.c.** Yes No INA In progress
Participation 6.d. There are clearly articulated linkages between participation in the assessment system and participation in standards-based instruction.	**Partic.6.d.** Yes No INA In progress

Action planning process recording form for participation evidence

1. Tally the scores your group gave for the indicators of inclusive participation for each principle:

Total Score for **Participation**: (total number yes, no, information not available, in progress in each principle category)

Principle 1:	All students	_____ Yes	____ No	___ INA	___ In progress
Principle 2:	Decisions	_____ Yes	____ No	___ INA	___ In progress
Principle 3:	Reporting	_____ Yes	____ No	___ INA	___ In progress
Principle 4:	Accountability	_____ Yes	____ No	___ INA	___ In progress
Principle 5:	Improvement	_____ Yes	____ No	___ INA	___ In progress
Principle 6:	Inclusive School Reform	_____ Yes	____ No	___ INA	___ In progress

2. Identify additional evidence needed to evaluate the implementation of these indicators.

Once you have the evidence you need, then answer the following questions:

a. Based on the evidence you have considered, which principles have the most indicators of best practices in place?

b. Based on the evidence, which principles are in the most need of strengthening?

c. Which principles and indicators are the most critical to the development of positive outcomes for students with disabilities?

d. Which indicators do you have the best opportunities to change? Short term? Long term?

e. How will you bring these changes about? Brainstorm and record specific steps to effect the change for your highest priorities.

f. What is a realistic time frame to implement changes? Who can provide leadership to ensure these changes occur in this time frame?

g. What resources (time, human, material, financial) do you need to take these actions?

3. Develop a strategic outreach strategy to share your action plan and build support for the effort. When all the necessary partners are involved in your effort, proceed to implementation of your action plan.

ACCOMMODATIONS SELF STUDY CHECKLIST
ADAPTATION TO STATE AND DISTRICT SETTINGS

These optional process steps will help you adapt the checklists to your specific setting.

Step One: Background Review of Principles and Characteristics. If necessary, review the Principles and Characteristics of Inclusive Assessment and Accountability Systems. You may do this review in a small group prior to your work on the checklists, or you can do this as part of your process to work with the checklists.

You may use a simple jigsaw process to do this in the group. The jigsaw process is a generic process that allows a group to understand lengthy or complex materials by breaking the entire document into smaller pieces. It consists of three steps generally:
Step 1: Team Assignments – Divide the material into smaller parts, and assign each section to each person or group.
Step 2: Individual review of the pieces – Invite each person or group to read their section, and think about how to share the content with others.
Step 3: Team sharing of pieces, fitting the pieces together – Ask each person or group to share the information they gathered, fitting the pieces of your content puzzle together.

Identify additions in concepts that are important to you in your setting; or discuss components of the principles that you wish to adapt or delete. Justify any additions or deletions based on what you understand to be the best outcomes for students with disabilities in assessment and accountability systems.

Step Two: **Review of Participation Self Study Checklist, and Identification of Additional Implementation Indicators**. Implementation indicators are conditions that indicate the extent to which a standards-based education system reflects the principles and characteristics of inclusive systems. These may vary depending on your setting. Add setting-specific indicators to the self-study checklist. Record them on the form that follows for use by your group.

Step Three: **Examples of Key Questions and Supporting Evidence.** As you work through the self-study checklists, look at the examples of key questions and supporting evidence that follow the form, and discuss other questions and supporting evidence that will help you evaluate the status of each indicator in your setting. Record them on the form that follows, and add this information to the checklists when you convene your group.

PRINCIPLE # _____ **Self-study checklist: ACCOMMODATIONS**

Setting-Specific Indicators	Setting-Specific Key Questions	Setting-Specific Supporting Evidence

EXAMPLES OF KEY QUESTIONS – ACCOMMODATIONS

Accommodations Indicators

Principle 1 – All Students

- How are accommodations defined in state and district policy?
- Are these definitions consistent with best practice considerations?

Principle 2 - Decisions

- How are data on accommodations use gathered? How are the data used?
- Do IEP teams understand the consequences of specific accommodations or modifications?

Principle 3 – Reporting

- How do the reports of student participation and performance address use of accommodations?

Principle 4 - Accountability

- Are scores of students who use accommodations included in our accountability formulas?

Principle 5 – School Improvement

- Do we have a mechanism to gather data on use of accommodations?
- Is there any training available for IEP teams, or for teachers on accommodations?

Principle 6 – Inclusive School Reform

- Can any student who needs them use accommodations to show he or she knows?

EXAMPLES OF EVIDENCE – ACCOMMODATIONS

All Students

Copies of accommodations policies, review of official federal guidance on accommodations and modifications, review of research base

Decisions

Report from state and district administrators on data being gathered, survey of IEP team members on their understanding of the decisions, report from assessment publisher on patterns of accommodations use

Reporting

Copies of reports, explanations of what the reports mean

Accountability

Report on how students who use accommodations are included in the accountability index

School Improvement

Copies of reports on accommodations use, training schedule, content, audience

Inclusive School Reform

Policy on use of accommodations, discussions with policy leaders

ACCOMMODATIONS
SELF STUDY CHECKLIST
(Action planning process and recording form follow the checklist.)

Indicators of inclusive *accommodations* policies and practices: *To score, circle yes or no to the right of each item, based on knowledge of your current system. If you have insufficient information to respond to an item, circle INA (Information Not Available). Tally yes, no, and INA answers at the end of the checklist. You may consider the indicators to be "in progress," and then you will want to define precisely where you are in implementation, and what you need to do next. The responses may vary from the state view, to the district view, to the local school view.*	**Rating**
Principle 1: All students. *All students with disabilities are included in the assessment system.* **Accommodations 1.a.** Accommodations (and other related terms like modification and adaptation) are defined and their purpose and implications are clearly explained.	**Principle 1** - *All* students **Accom.1.a.** Yes No INA In progress
Principle 2: Decisions. *Decisions about how students with disabilities participate in the assessment system are the result of clearly articulated participation, accommodations, and alternate assessment decision-making processes.* **Accommodations 2.a.** There are provisions for the use of accommodations across all components of the state or district assessment system. **Accommodation 2.b.** Test accommodations are available for all students who need them, regardless of placement or label (including students who do not receive special education services).	**Principle 2** – *Decisions* **Accom.2.a.** Yes No INA In progress **Accom.2.b.** Yes No INA In progress

Accommodation 2.c. Accommodations are organized and listed by type to facilitate the decision-making process (e.g., response, presentation, setting, schedule).	**Accom.2.c.** Yes No INA In progress
Accommodation 2.d. Accommodation decisions are made for each subtest or section of each criterion referenced and norm referenced test.	**Accom.2.d** Yes No INA In progress
Accommodation 2.e. Assessment accommodation decisions are considered in the context of the accommodations a student typically receives during classroom instruction or assessment.	**Accom.2.e.** Yes No INA In progress
Accommodations 2.f. IEP teams are provided clear information about which accommodations may affect the construct being measured for state and district norm referenced and criterion referenced assessments.	**Accom.2.f.** Yes No INA In progress
Accommodations 2.g. There is a clear explanation of the process for compiling data on individual accommodation decisions and how the information will be used.	**Accom.2.g.** Yes No INA In progress
Principle 3: Reporting. *All students with disabilities are included when student scores are publicly reported, in the same frequency and format as all other students whether they participate with or without accommodations, or in an alternate assessment.*	**Principle 3** – *Reporting*
Accommodations 3.a. State and district reports include the number of students using accommodations on each test (by subpart), and the type of accommodation(s) used by each student is specified on student reports.	**Accom.3.a.** Yes No INA In progress
Accommodations 3.b. State and district reports include scores for students using accommodations, regardless of how the accommodation affects the construct, although some scores may be in disaggregated form if there are technical reasons to do so.	**Accom.3.b.** Yes No INA In progress

Principle 4: Accountability. *The assessment performance of all students with disabilities is included in accountability indices at the district, state and federal levels, as an equal factor to all other student assessment data, regardless of how the students participate in the assessment system (i.e., with or without accommodations, or in an alternate assessment).* **Accommodations 4.a**. Students who use accommodations that may affect the measured construct are included in the accountability index through multiple measures or panel review to validate appropriate level of proficiency.	**Principle 4** – *Accountability* **Accom.4.a.** Yes No INA In progress
Principle 5: Improvement. *There is improvement of both the assessment system and the accountability system over time, through the processes of formal monitoring, ongoing evaluation, and systematic training in the context of emerging research and best practice.* **Accommodations 5.a.** Monitoring and evaluation processes include gathering data on the use of test accommodations to improve practices at the student, school, district, and state levels, aligned to emerging research and best practices. **Accommodations 5.b.** Based on monitoring and evaluation data, and emerging research and best practice indicators, ongoing training on accommodations is in place for IEP teams and other key personnel.	**Principle 5** – *Improvement* **Accom.5.a.** Yes No INA In progress **Accom.5.b.** Yes No INA In progress
Principle 6: Inclusive School Reform. *Every policy and practice reflects the belief that* ***all students*** *must be included in state and district assessment and accountability systems.* **Accommodations 6.a.** Accommodations are available to all students who need them to access the general curriculum.	**Principle 6** – *Inclusive School Reform* **Accom.6.a.** Yes No INA In progress

Action planning process recording form for accommodations evidence

1. Tally the scores your group gave for the indicators of inclusive participation for each principle:

Total Score for **Accommodations**: (total number yes, no, information not available, in progress in each principle category)

Principle 1:	All students	____	Yes	____	No	___ INA	___ In progress
Principle 2:	Decisions	____	Yes	____	No	___ INA	___ In progress
Principle 3:	Reporting	____	Yes	____	No	___ INA	___ In progress
Principle 4:	Accountability	____	Yes	____	No	___ INA	___ In progress
Principle 5:	Improvement	____	Yes	____	No	___ INA	___ In progress
Principle 6:	Inclusive School Reform	____	Yes	____	No	___ INA	___ In progress

2. Identify additional evidence needed to evaluate the implementation of these indicators.

Once you have the evidence you need, then answer the following questions:

a. Based on the evidence you have considered, which principles have the most indicators of best practices in place?

b. Based on the evidence, which principles are in the most need of strengthening?

c. Which principles and indicators are the most critical to the development of positive outcomes for students with disabilities?

d. Which indicators do you have the best opportunities to change? Short term? Long term?

e. How will you bring these changes about? Brainstorm and record specific steps to effect the change for your highest priorities.

f. What is a realistic time frame to implement changes? Who can provide leadership to ensure these changes occur in this time frame?

g. What resources (time, human, material, financial) do you need to take these actions?

3. Develop a strategic outreach strategy to share your action plan and build support for the effort. When all the necessary partners are involved in your effort, proceed to implementation of your action plan.

ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT SELF STUDY CHECKLIST
ADAPTATION TO STATE AND DISTRICT SETTINGS

These optional process steps will help you adapt the checklists to your specific setting.

Step One: Background Review of Principles and Characteristics. If necessary, review the Principles and Characteristics of Inclusive Assessment and Accountability Systems. You may do this review in a small group prior to your work on the checklists, or you can do this as part of your process to work with the checklists.

You may use a simple jigsaw process to do this in the group. The jigsaw process is a generic process that allows a group to understand lengthy or complex materials by breaking the entire document into smaller pieces. It consists of three steps generally:
Step 1: Team Assignments – Divide the material into smaller parts, and assign each section to each person or group.
Step 2: Individual review of the pieces – Invite each person or group to read their section, and think about how to share the content with others.
Step 3: Team sharing of pieces, fitting the pieces together – Ask each person or group to share the information they gathered, fitting the pieces of your content puzzle together.

Identify additions in concepts that are important to you in your setting; or discuss components of the principles that you wish to adapt or delete. Justify any additions or deletions based on what you understand to be the best outcomes for students with disabilities in assessment and accountability systems.

Step Two: **Review of Participation Self Study Checklist, and Identification of Additional Implementation Indicators**. Implementation indicators are conditions that indicate the extent to which a standards-based education system reflects the principles and characteristics of inclusive systems. These may vary depending on your setting. Add setting-specific indicators to the self-study checklist. Record them on the form that follows for use by your group.

Step Three: **Examples of Key Questions and Supporting Evidence.** As you work through the self-study checklists, look at the examples of key questions and supporting evidence that follow the form, and discuss other questions and supporting evidence that will help you evaluate the status of each indicator in your setting. Record them on the form that follows, and add this information to the checklists when you convene your group.

PRINCIPLE # _____ **Self-study checklist: ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT**

Setting-Specific Indicators	Setting-Specific Key Questions	Setting-Specific Supporting Evidence

EXAMPLES OF KEY QUESTIONS – ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT - Alternate Assessment Indicators

Principle 1 – All Students

- How is the alternate assessment linked to our state standards?
- Is alternate assessment an option for all parts of our assessment system?

Principle 2 - Decisions

- Do we monitor the appropriateness of decisions to participate in alternate assessments?
- What percentage of students participate in alternate assessment?

Principle 3 – Reporting

- What values do our scoring criteria or rubrics reflect, and thus encourage?
- How are the participation and performance of students participating in the alternate assessment reported?

Principle 4 - Accountability

- How have we resolved the policy issue of integrating alternate assessment scores into accountability formulas?
- How have we ensured that high expectations are embedded in our alternate assessment process?

Principle 5 - Improvement

- How do we continually improve our alternate assessments, and their effect on raising student outcomes?
- What training is available to IEP teams and teachers?

Principle 6 – Inclusive School Reform

- Are all of our teachers included in training on standards-based instructional strategies?
- How are our alternate assessment processes integrated with other best practices for students with significant disabilities?

EXAMPLES OF EVIDENCE – ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT

All Students
Description of alternate assessment, and the linkage to state standards held for all students

Decisions
Report of numbers and percentages of students in alternate assessment, monitoring, and reports of appropriateness

Reporting
Copies of actual reports, review of process to develop scoring criteria or rubrics

Accountability
Policy statement on inclusion of alternate assessment scores into state and district accountability system, sample results from student assessments demonstrating high expectations and learning

Improvement
Review of plan to refine alternate assessment based on data, review of initial results of alternate assessment reflecting student outcomes, schedule of training, content, audiences

Inclusive School Reform
Schedule of training with description of target audiences, review of integration of alternate assessment processes as they connect to other best practice

ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT
SELF STUDY CHECKLIST

(Action planning process and recording form follow the checklist.)

Indicators of inclusive *alternate assessment* policies and practices: *To score, circle yes or no to the right of each item, based on knowledge of your current system. If you have insufficient information to respond to an item, circle INA (Information Not Available). Tally yes, no, and INA responses at the end of the checklist. You may consider the indicators to be "in progress," and then you will want to define precisely where you are in implementation, and what you need to do next. The responses may vary from the state view, to the district view, to the local school view.*	**Rating**
Principle 1: All students. *All students with disabilities are included in the assessment system.*	**Principle 1** – *ALL* students
Alternate Assessment 1.a. Alternate assessments are aligned with state standards held for all students, through some process of extension, expansion, access, or other high performance bridge to the state content standards.	**AA.1.a.** Yes No INA In progress
Alternate Assessment 1.b. Alternate assessment options are available across all components of the state or district assessment system.	**AA.1.b.** Yes No INA In progress
Alternate Assessment 1.c. Alternate assessment options promote the use of a variety of valid authentic performance-based assessment strategies aligned to standards, allowing *all* students to be able to show what they know and are able to do.	**AA.1.c** Yes No INA In progress

Principle 2: Decisions. *Decisions about how students with disabilities participate in the assessment system are the result of clearly articulated participation, accommodations, and alternate assessment decision-making processes.*	**Principle 2** – *Decisions*
Alternate Assessment 2.a. State policies include an estimate of the percent of students expected to participate in alternate assessments, as general guidance to help teams understand the need to include as many students as appropriate in the general assessment.	**AA.2.a.** Yes No INA In progress
Alternate Assessment 2.b. Decisions are based on the ability of the student to take the general assessment with or without accommodations, • NOT whether the student is expected to perform poorly on the general assessment. • NOT whether the student is working toward standards in the general curriculum. All students should have access to the general curriculum, and thus have opportunity to learn toward high standards. • NOT on the basis of placement (e.g., self-contained vs. resource room vs. general education classroom)	**AA.2.b.** Yes No INA In progress
Alternate Assessment 2.c. There is a clear explanation of the process for compiling data on individual alternate assessment decisions, to be used in planning and ordering materials, and for training purposes.	**AA.2.c.** Yes No INA In progress
Principle 3: Reporting. *All students with disabilities are included when student scores are publicly reported, in the same frequency and format as all other students whether they participate with or without accommodations, or in an alternate assessment.*	**Principle 3** – *Reporting*
Alternate Assessment 3.a. State and district reports include the number and percent of students participating in alternate assessments for each state and district assessment and each subtest within assessments.	**AA 3.a.** Yes No INA In progress

Alternate Assessment 3.b. State and district reports include scores for students participating in alternate assessments, although scores may be in disaggregated form if there are technical reasons to not aggregate.	**AA.3.b.** Yes No INA In progress
Alternate Assessment 3.c. Rubrics are developed to reflect research and best practice understanding of desired outcomes for students with significant disabilities, and reflect values and beliefs of committed stakeholders. At a minimum, validity measures include the study of face validity of the rubrics.	**AA.3.c.** Yes No INA In progress
Alternate Assessment 3.d. Scoring and reporting processes include a detailed approach for administration, with clearly defined performance standards, scoring and recording procedures, and reliability checks built into the process.	**AA.3.d.** Yes No INA In progress
Alternate Assessment 3.e. The confidentiality of individual alternate assessment participants is ensured by not publicly reporting any disaggregated data that may compromise student privacy.	**AA.3.e.** Yes No INA In progress
Principle 4: Accountability. *The assessment performance of all students with disabilities is included in accountability indices at the district, state, and federal levels, as an equal factor to all other student assessment data, regardless of how the students participate in the assessment system (i.e., with or without accommodations, or in an alternate assessment).*	**Principle 4** – *Accountability*
Alternate Assessment 4.a. Alternate assessment scores are integrated into the adequate yearly progress accountability index as an equal factor with all other scores.	**AA.4.a.** Yes No INA In progress

Principle 5: Improvement. *There is improvement of both the assessment system and the accountability system over time, through the processes of formal monitoring, ongoing evaluation, and systematic training in the context of emerging research and best practice.*	**Principle 5** – *Improvement*
Alternate Assessment 5.a. There are monitoring and evaluation processes that include gathering of data on use of alternate assessments to improve practices at the student, school, district, and state levels, aligned to emerging research and best practices.	**AA.5.a.** Yes No INA In progress
Alternate Assessment 5.b. Based on monitoring and evaluation data, and emerging research and best practice indicators, training on alternate assessment is in place for IEP teams and other key personnel including principals, counselors, school psychologists, and others.	**AA.5.b.** Yes No INA In progress
Principle 6: Inclusive School Reform. *Every policy and practice reflects the belief that* ***all students*** *must be included in state and district assessment and accountability systems.*	**Principle 6** – *Inclusive School Reform*
Alternate Assessment 6.a. Alternate assessment practices are embedded in standards-based instructional activities throughout the course of the assessment period, across multiple settings.	**AA.6.a.** Yes No INA In progress
Alternate Assessment 6.b. Alternate assessment practices are integrated with other related efforts like inclusion models, transition planning, and best practice IEP development.	**AA.6.b.** Yes No INA In progress

Action planning process recording form for alternate assessment evidence

1. Tally the scores your group gave for the indicators of inclusive participation for each principle:

Total Score for **Alternate Assessment**: (total number yes, no, information not available, in progress in each principle category)

Principle 1:	All students	_____ Yes	____ No	___ INA	___ In progress
Principle 2:	Decisions	_____ Yes	____ No	___ INA	___ In progress
Principle 3:	Reporting	_____ Yes	____ No	___ INA	___ In progress
Principle 4:	Accountability	_____ Yes	____ No	___ INA	___ In progress
Principle 5:	Improvement	_____ Yes	____ No	___ INA	___ In progress
Principle 6:	Inclusive School Reform	_____ Yes	____ No	___ INA	___ In progress

2. Identify additional evidence needed to evaluate the implementation of these indicators.

Once you have the evidence you need, then answer the following questions:

a. Based on the evidence you have considered, which principles have the most indicators of best practices in place?

b. Based on the evidence, which principles are in the most need of strengthening?

c. Which principles and indicators are the most critical to the development of positive outcomes for students with disabilities?

d. Which indicators do you have the best opportunities to change? Short term? Long term?

e. How will you bring these changes about? Brainstorm and record specific steps to effect the change for your highest priorities.

f. What is a realistic time frame to implement changes? Who can provide leadership to ensure these changes occur in this time frame?

g. What resources (time, human, material, financial) do you need to take these actions?

3. Develop a strategic outreach strategy to share your action plan and build support for the effort. When all the necessary partners are involved in your effort, proceed to implementation of your action plan.